

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 10453

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, SA, PK,
SUBJ: KING KHALID'S UPCOMING PAKISTAN VISIT

REF: JIDDA 6565

SUMMARY: THE LAVISH RECEPTION THE GOP IS PLANNING TO GIVE
SAUDI KING KHALID HERE NEXT WEEK REFLECTS THE IMPORTANT POSITION
THE SAG HAS IN THE BHUTTO GOVERNMENT'S APPROACH TO FOREIGN
POLICY, AND THE CONSIDERATION THE PAKS FEEL FOR THE SPECIAL
ROLE OF THE SAUDIS IN THE ISLAMIC WORLD. THE GOP SEES IN
THE VISIT AN OCCASION TO INDUCE THE SAUDIS TO MOVE FORWARD
ON FURTHER ECONOMIC AND SECURITY ASSISTANCE. RELATIONS BE-
TWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES ARE CLOSE, AND THE GOP LOOKS
TO THE SAG AS ITS FIRREST AND MOST IMPORTANT SUPPORTER
IN THE ARAB WORLD. SAUDI ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO PAKISTAN
HAS BEEN GENEROUS. THE GOP DOUBTLESS WELCOMES THE SAUDIS'
SIMPLISTIC (PRO-ISLAM, ANTI-COMMUNIST) APPROACH TO THE
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SUBCONTINENT. IN SEEKING FURTHER SAUDI COMMITMENTS, AND

VIEWING THE KHALID VISIT AS AN OCCASION TO MOVE FORWARD TOWARD NAILING THESE DOWN, THE GOP SEEMS TO BE AWARE OF THE APPARENT SAUDI PREFERENCE FOR THE EARMARKING OF FUNDS FOR SPECIFIC PROJECTS AND WEAPONS SYSTEMS OVER CASH LOANS AND GRANTS. END SUMMARY.

1. AS JIDDA'S EXCELLENT MESSAGE (REFTEL) SUGGESTS, THE GOP ATTACHES GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE UPCOMING VISIT OF SAUDI KING KHALID TO PAKISTAN. THE KING'S OCTOBER 10-15 TOUR OF ISLAMABAD, LAHORE AND KARACHI IS THE OUTCOME OF LONG, HARD GOP EFFORTS TO PERSUADE THE MONARCH TO COME HERE, AND THE PAKS ARE GOING ALL OUT TO ENSURE THAT THE TRIP GOES WELL. JUDGING FROM THE PREPARATIONS WE CAN SEE ON ALL SIDES, HE WILL BE GIVEN ONE OF THE MOST LAVISH WELCOMES EVER AFFORDED A FOREIGN DIGNITARY.

2. THE RECEPTION THE GOP IS PREPARING FOR KING KHALID IS A DRAMATIC DEMONSTRATION OF THE IMPORTANT POSITION THE SAUDIS HAVE IN THE BHUTTO GOVERNMENT'S APPROACH TO FOREIGN POLICY. IT ALSO REFLECTS THE GOP'S AWARENESS OF A WIDELY-FELT FEELING HERE THAT THE ROLE OF THE SAUDIS AS STAUNCH MUSLIMS AND KEEPERS OF ISLAM'S HOLY PLACES MERITS THEM SPECIAL CONSIDERATION. THE GOP ALSO SEES IN THE VISIT AN OPPORTUNITY TO IMPRESS ON THE SAUDI LEADERS PAKISTAN'S ECONOMIC AND SECURITY NEEDS AND TO MOVE CLOSER TO FURTHER SAG FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS TO HELP MEET THEM.

3. PAKISTAN ENJOYS A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SAG AND LOOKS TO IT AS ITS FIRMEST AND MOST IMPORTANT SUPPORTER IN THE ARAB WORLD. THE NATURALLY-WAR RELATIONS BETWEEN THESE TWO ISLAMIC COUNTRIES, ONE THE GUARDIAN OF THE HOLY PLACES OF THE FAITH, THE OTHER ESTABLISHED AMID VIOLENCE AS A MUSLIM HOMELAND, WAS FOSTERED BY THE PREFERENCE OF EARLIER PAK GOVERNMENTS FOR MORE CONSERVATIVE ARAB REGIMES. THE DEVELOPMENT OF SAUDI ECONOMIC STRENGTH AND POLITICAL INFLUENCE AND THE STRENUOUS EFFORTS OF THE POST-1971 BHUTTO GOVERNMENT TO GIVE A MORE ISLAMIC CAST TO PAK FOREIGN POLICY HAVE HEIGHTENED THE RELATIONSHIP. (THE PAKS SOUGHT TO DRAMATIZE THIS LAST ASPECT BQKTHEIR HOSTING OF THE CONFIDENTIAL

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LAHORE ISLAMIC SUMMIT IN 1974. KING FAISAL WAS A CENTER OF PAK ATTRACTION THERE, AND REMAINS A REMARKABLY REVERED MODEL OF ISLAMIC PIETY IN PAKISTAN.)

4. SAUDI ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO PAKISTAN HAS BEEN GENEROUS. IN THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE SAUDIS HAVE PROMISED PAKISTAN \$100 MILLION IN PROJECT AID FOR TWO CEMENT PLANTS, A POLYESTER PLANT, AND A FERTILIZER

PLANT. IN ADDITION, A \$30 MILLION LOAN FROM THE SAUDI FUND FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR THE PAKISTAN-SAUDI FERTILIZER PLANT HAS BEEN APPROVED. THESE LOANS WERE ALL ON FAVORABLE TERMS (INTEREST FREE, 15-YEAR LOANS WITH A FIVE-YEAR GRACE PERIOD). SAUDI ARABIA ALSO EXTENDED A \$10 MILLION GRANT TO PAKISTAN AT THE TIME OF THE DECEMBER 1974 EARTHQUAKE. ASIDE FROM THESE GRANTS AND LOANS, THE PAK ECONOMY HAS SIGNIFICANTLY BENEFITED FROM THE REMITTANCES OF PAKISTANI TECHNICIANS AND WORKERS IN THE KINGDOM. WE ARE NOT AWARE OF ANY RECENT SAG FUNDING SPECIFICALLY EARMARKED FOR MILITARY SUPPLIES, BUT THE GOP HAS LONG ENTERTAINED HIGH HOPES ON THIS SCORE.

5. THE PAKS WOULD PROBABLY HAVE NO QUARREL WITH EMBASSY JIDDA'S ASSESSMENT THAT THE SAG VIEWS THE BHUTTO REGIME FAVORABLY AS UPHOLDING THE SAUDIS' TWO MAJOR GOALS IN SOUTH ASIA: STRENGTHENING ISLAM AND PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF COMMUNISM. THEY ALMOST CERTAINLY WELCOME SUCH A SIMPLISTIC APPRAISAL OF THE SUBCONTINENTAL REGION. THEIR POLICY OF SEEKING A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN THE PRESSING OF MUSLIM CAUSES (WHILE AVOIDING INVOLVEMENT IN INTRA-ISLAMIC RIVALRIES) HAS HAD THIS KIND OF FAVORABLE REACTION ON THE PART OF BROTHER MUSLIM COUNTRIES AS ONE OF ITS PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVES. WE GATHER FROM THE PAKS THAT THE ANTI-COMMUNIST ASPECT OF THE SAUDIS' FAVORABLE APPROACH HAS NOT BEEN ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY THE GOP'S LONGTIME FRIENDSHIP WITH PEKING, NOT SHARED BY THE SAG. THEY DOUBTLESS WOULD EXPECT BROAD SAUDI POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SUPPORT, AND POSSIBLY THE TRANSFER OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT AS WELL, IN THE EVENT OF ANOTHER CONFRONTATION WITH INDIA. THEY REGARD THE LARGE CONTINGENT OF PAK MILITARY PERSONNEL IN THE KINGDOM AS CONTRIBUTING FURTHER TO CLOSE GOP-SAG TIES.

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6. IN SEEKING FURTHER SAUDI COMMITMENTS, AND VIEWING THE KHALID VISIT AS AN OCCASION TO MOVE FORWARD TOWARD NAILING THESE DOWN, THE GOP APPEARS TO BE AWARE OF THE APPARENT SAUDI PREFERENCE FOR EARMARKING FUNDS FOR SPECIFIC ECONOMIC PROJECTS AND WEAPONS SYSTEMS OVER CASH LOANS AND GRANTS"04 WHILE WE DO NOT HAVE ANY FIRM EVIDENCE, WE HAVE ASSUMED THAT ON THE MILITARY SIDE THE GOP HAS PASSED A SHOPPING LIST TO THE SAG, AS THEY HAVE TO US, THE BRITISH, AND THE IRANIANS. THERE WILL BE AN INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE JOINT SAUDI-PAK MINISTERIAL COMMISSION, LED ON THE GOP SIDE BY MINISTER OF STATE AZIZ AHMED, A FREQUENT VISITOR TO SAUDI ARABIA, AND THIS, ALONG WITH THE MORE IMPORTANT PRIVATE SESSIONS, WILL PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE PAKS TO LOOSEN THE ROYAL PURSE-STRINGS, TO THE EXTENT THEY JUDGE IT DIPLOMATIC TO TRY TO DO SO. IF ANYTHING

HAS BEEN WORKED OUT IN ADVANCE, THE PAKS ARE NOT TELLING
US. THE MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR THE MIDDLE EAST MAINTAINS
THAT TO HIS KNOWLEDGE THERE ARE NO PLANS TO ANNOUNCE ANY
FRESH SAUDI COMMITMENTS DURING THE VISIT.

7. EMBASSY WILL BE REPORTING FURTHER ONCE THE HOOPLA
IS OVER AND WILL WELCOME JIDDA'S ASSESSMENT OF THE OUTCOME
OF THE VISIT.
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